

Tips for Bottle Feeding



Feeding an infant can be one of the most enjoyable parts of taking care of them. Parents and caregivers may have different ideas about feeding. Having a policy in place will help insure that everyone is following current information on feeding practices and meeting the needs of infants.

Preparing the Bottle

- Wash your hands before you start.
- Always use a clean and sanitized bottle and nipple with each feeding.
- Always follow mixing directions exactly.
- To warm bottle: loosen cap of bottle, set bottle in hot water (not boiling) for five minutes or run warm water over bottle.
- Always shake bottle to prevent hotspots.
- **NEVER USE A MICROWAVE** to warm a bottle. It heats unevenly and breaks down nutrients in the milk.
- Test milk temperature on wrist before use. Milk should feel slightly warm.
- Mark each bottle with the child's name and date and make sure they are capped.
- Never put cereal in a bottle.



Breast Milk

- Make sure breast milk is clearly dated and labeled for each child. Only use bottles labeled for the day's date.
- If breast milk is not in a ready-to-use, make sure the bottle and nipple to be used are clean and sanitized.
- Breast milk may be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container for 48 hours or in the refrigerator freezer for up to 2 weeks or 3 months in deep freezer of 0 degrees.
- All expressed milk should be refrigerated after 1 hour if use will be delayed.

Feeding Baby

Every baby should be fed on demand however; most babies will need to be fed every 2-3 hours with 3-8 ounces depending on age.

- Always hold the baby in a semi-upright position when feeding.
- Hold bottle at bottom and tip up to make sure the nipple is full of milk and no air is trapped.
- Burp the baby half way through feeding and again at the end.
- Discard all formula or breast milk remaining in the bottle after each feeding. All milk should be used within 1 hour.
- NEVER prop bottles.
- Never put a baby to bed with a bottle.
- Don't allow children to walk with bottles.
- Only use bottles labeled with the current day's date.

Talking Points for Parents

- Share your policy on bottle feeding for both formula and breast milk.
- Make a point to talk about their baby's feeding schedule and any special issues.
- Communicate daily with the parents about the feedings each day and if there are any changes in eating patterns.
- Explain putting a baby to bed with a bottle increases the risk of ear infections and tooth decay.

Social and Learning Opportunities

Here are some things to remember to make infant feeding a special time.

- One-on-one attention allows the child to bond with the caregiver.
- Holding and feeding a baby creates a warm, secure environment, allowing the infant to feel comfortable to learn and grow.

Resources:

Healthy Child Care magazine: www.healthychild.net or 877-258-6178.

*Information consistent with Caring for Our Children 2002:
<http://nrc.uchsc.edu>